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## MISCELLANEA.

## THE EGYPTIAN PURIM.

THE Megillah, which even at the present day is read in Cairo on the 28th of Adar in commemoration of the wonderful escape of the Jews under Ahmed Shaitân, was published thirty years ago by Dr. Löwe, the travelling companion of Sir Moses Montefiore. In Nos. 7-9 of the Hebrew magazine *Hamagid*, from February 14-28, 1866, the text of this Megillah, as read in Cairo, is printed, together with the most important explanations indicated by the Arabic translation, which Dr. Löwe had also made use of. It seems that Professor Graetz did not use this publication, for, although he refers in the third edition of the ninth volume, p. 22, n. 1, to *Hamagid*, 10—he quotes erroneously pp. 7-9—he only knows that “formerly” a Megillah existed, an observation which induced Mr. Margoliouth to talk of “the long-lost Megillah of the Egyptian Purim” (*J.Q.R.*, VIII, p. 274). In the same volume of *Hamagid*, No. 16, Supplement, mention is made of this Purim by Gurland, who publishes, from a St. Petersburg manuscript, Samuel ben Nachman’s note on these events, which was edited in the same year by Dr. Neubauer (*Aus der Petersburger Bibliothek*, p. 118, N. XXI a).

The text which lay before Mr. Margoliouth is the same which was made known to us by Dr. Löwe, except that it is more correct and complete, owing to the fact that the numerous gaps, occasioned by similar endings, are filled up. For the sake of attaining still greater accuracy I give here a few corrections, offered by a comparison of both texts.

Page 277, line 10, instead of חַמְמָם probably חַמְמָם. **הַחֲמָם**

„ „ „ 1 from bottom, read **אֶלֶף אִישׁ**.

„ 278, „ 4, read **וַיַּפְלֹהוּ** instead of **וַיַּפְלִילֵה**.

„ „ „ 18, read **זָעַקָּה** and **וְבָכֵי** instead of **וְקָרְאוּ**.

„ „ „ 20, read **שָׁוּעָתָם** instead of **בְּכִיחָם**.

„ „ „ 4 from bottom, read **אִישׁ יְהוּדִי**.

„ 279, „ 2, read **יַנְחַן**.

„ „ „ 6, read **שְׁלֵל**.

Page 279, line 9. במהירה אמיהכם. It is noteworthy that *Sambari*, p. 145, also must have had the reading ב מהירות in the text of the Megillah.

- ” ” ” 18, read מקצת היהודים.
- ” ” ” 24, read לאבד, בשבועה עשר לאות.
- ” 280, ” 2, the words וישבעו איש לאחיו, ויקחו are missing.
- ” ” ” 5, reads correctly וירדפו אחריו חיל המלך שלמה ולא מצאה ויהי בראות.
- ” ” ” 13–14, always בשדרה הנקנים.
- ” ” ” 19, read וכל חילו.
- ” ” ” 21, read ויחר[ן]בו.
- ” ” ” 22, read ובוים שבעה ועשרים.
- ” ” ” 25, read אותו, תלוי.
- ” 281, ” 2, read והשיב عملם.
- ” ” ” 4, read ועשרות בו.
- ” ” ” 5, read מיד שונאיםיהם ומקבשי רעהם.
- ” ” ” 10, read בכל אויביך ה' ושונאי סגולתך.

השיענו ה' אלקינו וקבצנו מהירה מן הזויים להווות לשם קדרון להשתבח בתהלהך ואנחנו עמך וצאן מרעיתך נורא לך לעולם לדור ודור נספר תחלתך.

The conclusion reads more completely: אלקינו וקבצנו מהירה מן הזויים להווות לשם קדרון להשתבח בתהלהך ואנחנו עמך וצאן מיד שונאיםיהם ומקבשי רעהם בכל אויביך ה' ושונאי סגולתך. The 28th of Adar is, according to the plain statement in the Megillah and the tradition of the Egyptian Jews, the Purim of Cairo<sup>1</sup>. Samuel b. Nachman's statement that Ahmed Shaitân was beheaded on the 15th of Adar is an error. Although he was an eye-witness of the events, and a victim of the plundering—ולקחו גם בן כל אשר יש לוי בית (not as Dr. Neubauer reads)—yet the date of the 28th of Adar is too well attested to underlie any doubt. It seems that the 14th of Adar was the day on which the danger was worst, and this lost Purim day should be replaced by an everlasting new one. The latter was to be fixed a fortnight after the 14th, and should be always celebrated on the same day of the week as the old one. Thus I understand Sambari's words: ולפי שבויים שיפול פורים ב' י"ד לחיש יפול ג' ב' א' ח' ר' ד' א' י' ב'. The colophon, given by Sambari, corresponds with the year 1524. His other indication, however, עוד עשו סימן אחר יאר פניו אנחנו שנת אלף וחנו לשטרות false. For not 1456, but 1835, corresponds according to the aera contractuum with the year 1524. But it is clear that we must read here למן טירות for 1524–68 = 1456. Sambari's Chronicle well deserves a new edition, in which Dr. Neubauer's omissions might be supplemented and a distinct line drawn between that which is borrowed and Sambari's own information.

D. KAUFMANN.

<sup>1</sup> See Zunz, *die Ritus*, p. 130.